

Funding authorized by Rep. Israel's Long Island Sound Stewardship Act and requested by Reps. Lowey & Israel through their seats on the Appropriations Committee will protect and preserve the Sound ***Funding authorized by Rep. Israel's Long Island Sound Stewardship Act and requested by Reps. Lowey & Israel through their seats on the Appropriations Committee will protect and preserve the Sound***

Washington, DC – On Wednesday, Reps. Nita Lowey (D – Westchester/Rockland) and Steve Israel (D – Long Island) announced that Long Island Sound protection programs are slated to receive \$15 million in funding through the House Appropriations process. These funds were authorized by Rep. Israel's Long Island Sound Stewardship Act, which was signed into law in 2006.

"Since I came to Congress, one of my top priorities has been to protect and preserve Long Island's most precious resource: Long Island Sound. When former President Bush budgeted just \$500,000 for the Sound, I said no – we need to do better," said Rep. Israel. "This year, I'm proud to say we did much better. Long Island Sound protection programs will be getting the federal funds necessary to protect and preserve the Sound for all New Yorkers to enjoy."

"The Long Island Sound is a critical part of our economy, our environment, and our quality of life," said Lowey. "It is our responsibility to preserve this precious resource for future generations, and I am pleased we are on track for record funding of critical Sound protection programs. I will continue working to ensure this critical funding is signed into law."

In 2006, Rep. Israel passed the Long Island Sound Stewardship Act, which authorizes funding to identify and protect land along Long Island Sound. In 2005, Rep. Israel helped reauthorize the Long Island Sound Restoration Act, which authorizes funds to improve the water quality of the Sound. The funding amounts for the programs authorized by each law are determined by the Appropriations Committee.

For Fiscal Year 2009, Long Island Sound received \$3 million. For Fiscal Year 2008, Long Island Sound received \$4.9 million. The Fiscal Year 2010 amount is the highest level of funding yet for Long Island Sound under the Long Island Sound Stewardship Act and an increase of \$12 million over the Administration's initial \$3 million request.

The \$15 million in funding was passed by the full House Appropriations Committee, on which both Reps. Israel and Lowey serve.

Since its formation 11,000 years ago, Long Island Sound has sustained a diversity of birds, wildlife and marine organisms, including the endangered Piping Plover, while also serving as a recreational magnet for tens of thousands of Americans. Today, more than 8 million people live in the Sound's watershed with 20 million people living within 50 miles of its shores. The Sound alone contributes more than \$5 billion to the regional economy through sport and commercial fishing, recreation and tourism.